

Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this amendment is known also as LB 102. It was heard practically the last day of the Judiciary Committee and is essential to be passed this year. It waited its turn last year, got held up by the filibuster and as a result the Crime Victim's Reparation Board is about 80 to 100 cases behind. And the hang-up is that each application for a claim has to go through a hearing officer. These hearing officers are volunteer lawyers, pro bono, who volunteer their services, and it's very difficult to find a practicing attorney who has the time and is willing to volunteer that time necessary to review the claims. It is difficult to achieve consistency in determination when using two or more attorneys as hearing officers. This process greatly hinders the processing of claims in an expedient manner and it also increases the operational cost of the program in personnel time, duplication, mailing and, I might add, by your constituents calling, writing letters and responding to them as to why they are not getting their claim processed. 102 simply, in the appropriate places, establishes the executive officer in all...as the hearing officer in the Crime Victim's Reparation Act. If there are any questions I'd be glad to answer them. Otherwise, that's simply all it does, replaces the executive officer of the Nebraska Crime Commission as the hearing officer in the case of crime victim's reparations.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Senator Pirsch. Our first speaker on the Pirsch amendment is Senator Rasmussen.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, members of the body, I rise to support this amendment. I think what it does is to expedite the award of compensation to victims of crime. I think that it's most reasonable that we attempt to do that and I would note that for all those on the Judiciary Committee that were present voted unanimously to move this out of committee and that there was no opposition in the hearing to this bill and I would urge you to support this amendment to LB 186.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Senator. Senator Chizek.

SENATOR CHIZEK: Would Senator Pirsch to a question?